

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 802

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DR A Lotriet (DA) to ask the Minister of Arts and Culture:

- (1) “Whether her department has a policy regarding the use of new technologies in archival research; if not why not; if so, what are the relevant details”?
- (2) “Whether she had found the policy is applied consistently at all archival depots; if not, why not; if so what are the relevant details”?

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REPLY:

1. No. The application of new technologies in archives (and other heritage institutions such as libraries and museums) raises issues of intellectual property rights as well as challenges of conservation and authentication. Cases have arisen where images of documents copied by digital means at South African archival repositories have been sold on the internet from websites hosted outside this country. For these and other reasons my department has commissioned an investigation into digitisation policy and the outcome of this investigation is being currently awaited. It must be noted that in terms of Schedule 5 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) “Archives other than national archives” are part of the functional areas of exclusive provincial legislative competence.

2. Falls away